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Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 01603 161812Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------010020 161820Z /46
O R 161748Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9561
INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1603

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, GT, BH, UK
SUBJ: BELIZE: RESUMPTION OF UK-GOG TALKS

1. UK CONSUL MCQUILLAN SHOWED US CABLE FROM LONDON ADDRESSED TO HIM AND UK EMBASSY WASHINGTON ASKING FOR ASSESSMENT ON IMPACT OF GUATEMALAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS ON BELIZE NEGOTIATIONS, TO BE RECEIVED IN LONDON BY WEEKEND IN PREPARATION FOR CONSIDERATION AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL. MCQUILLAN WANTED TO TOUCH BASE WITH US BEFORE REPLYING.

2. MCQUILLAN NOTED ON CONFIDENTIAL BASIS THAT HE FEARED THAT LONDON HAD IN MIND PROPOSING TO GOG IN FORTHCOMING TALKS A PACKAGE CONSISTING OF A GREATLY GUTTED TREATY AND A DIVISION AT THE TEMASH WITH THE FAR SOUTHERN CAYS. IN HIS OPINION THERE WAS NO CHANCE THAT GOG WOULD CONSIDER SUCH A WATERED-DOWN PROPOSAL. HE EVEN HAD DOUBTS THAT GOG WOULD BE IN POSITION TO ACCEPT DIVISION AT MOHO UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. WITH THE MLN BITTERLY ANTI-LUCAS AND ANTI-GOVERNMENT AFTER THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, MLN WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO SEIZE UPON BELIZE ISSUE. AS A MATTER OF FACT MCQUILLAN HAD WARNED LONDON RECENTLY THAT COMMENTS WHICH PRICE RECENTLY MADE IN CARACAS COULD AROUSE SUSPICISIONS OF GOG AND BE EXPLOITED BY MLN.
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3. WE REPLIED TO MCQUILLAN THAT WE SHARED HIS ASSESSMENT THAT THE ELECTIONS HAD REDUCED THE FREEDOM OF MANEUVER OF LAUGERUD AND THAT PRICE'S RECENT ACTIONS HAD ALSO BEEN NOT VERY HELPFUL.

4. MCQUILLAN WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN QUERIED EARLIER IN THE WEEK BY LONDON AS TO HIS VIEWS ON WHEN WOULD BE A PROPITIOUS

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TIME TO REOPEN TALKS WITH THE GOG ON BELIZE. BY CHANCE MCQUILLAN HAD SEEN FOREIGN MINISTRY BELIZE DESK OFFICER RODRIGUEZ THE SAME DAY AND HAD GOTTEN DEFINITE IMPRESSION THAT GOG WOULD PREFER DEFER TALKS UNTIL EARLY APRIL, POSSIBILY WEEK OF APRIL 3, IN PART BECAUSE OF EXTENDED EASTER HOLIDAY SEASON. HE SO REPORTED TO LONDON. MCQUILLAN'S PERSONAL BELIEF IS THAT TALKS WILL TAKE PLACE, PROB-ABLY IN WASHINGTON AT THE ROWLANDS LEVEL IN EARLY APRIL, BUT THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT HE, MCQUILLAN, MAY BE ASKED TO PRESENT HMG PROPOSALS TO GOG BEFORE.

5. MCQUILLAN, AS ALWAYS, HAS BEEN UNUSUALLY FRANK AND OPEN IN SHARING HIS OPINIONS AND HE SHOULD BE PROTECTED.
BOSTER

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